



HR0375

LRB095 12062 DRJ 35817 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, A significant growth in Post-Traumatic Stress
3 Disorder (PTSD) has been identified over the past few years
4 with the escalation of combat veterans returning home from the
5 Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts; nation-wide calls for more
6 assistance for those returning with mental issues as a result
7 of combat have been growing, and this resolution is in response
8 to those calls; and

9 WHEREAS, As of January 2007, more than 1.6 million U.S.
10 Servicemen and women had served in Afghanistan and Iraq; and

11 WHEREAS, In October 2005, the U.S. Department of Veterans
12 Affairs reported that more than 430,000 U.S. soldiers have been
13 discharged from the military following service in Afghanistan
14 and Iraq; more than 119,000 have sought help for medical or
15 mental health issues from the Department of Veterans Affairs to
16 date; and

17 WHEREAS, In January 2006, the Journal of the American
18 Medical Association reported that 35% of Iraq Veterans have
19 already sought help for mental health concerns; a 2003 New
20 England Journal of Medicine Study found that more than 60% of
21 Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom veterans
22 showing symptoms of PTSD were unlikely to seek help due to

1 fears of stigmatization or loss of career advancement
2 opportunities; and

3 WHEREAS, In 2005, the Department of Veterans Affairs
4 reported that 18% of Afghanistan Veterans and 20% of Iraq
5 Veterans in their care were suffering from some type of
6 service-connected psychological disorder; and

7 WHEREAS, The Department of Veterans Affairs has seen a
8 tenfold increase in PTSD cases in 2006; according to the VA,
9 more than 37,000 Vets of Iraq and Afghanistan are suffering
10 from mental health disorders, and more than 16,000 have already
11 been diagnosed with PTSD; and

12 WHEREAS, According to the Army, since March 2003, at least
13 45 U.S. soldiers and 9 Marines have committed suicide in Iraq;
14 at least 20 soldiers and 23 Marines have committed suicide
15 since returning home, though exact numbers are not available;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, The United States Congress is currently
18 considering H.R. 612, H.R. 1538, S. 713, and H.R. 1268, which
19 address the tragic Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder situation
20 among our returning veterans; therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE

1 NINETY-FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
2 our returning veterans deserve the very best in healthcare,
3 including mental care, and that both the Federal Government and
4 State Governments must work together to provide this
5 healthcare; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That the State of Illinois wishes to be a model
7 State for the medical care that we offer to our returning
8 soldiers in joint partnership with the Federal Government; and
9 be it further

10 RESOLVED, That we urge Congress to act on H.R. 612, H.R.
11 1538, S. 713, and H.R. 1268 for the safety and well-being of
12 our returning veterans who face mental illness caused by their
13 fulfillment of their duties; and be it further

14 RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be sent
15 to the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader of the U.S.
16 Senate, the Speaker and the Minority Leader of the U.S. House
17 of Representatives, the Illinois Congressional Delegation, and
18 the Director of the Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs.